

Massachusetts Community Transportation Coordination Conference

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Older Driver Programs and Services

Presenters:

- Michele Ellicks, Community Outreach, MassDOT/Registry of Motor Vehicles
- Theadora Fisher, Mobility Outreach Coordinator, MassMobility

Overview

Older drivers are driving more miles, driving later in life, utilizing technology, limiting regulating their driving, but are involved in more motor vehicle crashes per miles driven than any other age group. An increase in collisions is seen beginning at age 75 and marked increase at age 80 due to functional impairments.

Driver Fitness Assessment

Functional impairments affect driving:

- Vision declines
- Reflexes/reaction times
- Hearing declines
- Cognitive ability declines
- Medical conditions & medications

Things to know

- When planning for retirement, plan for retirement from driving. Set up a transportation account.
- The RMV will swap out any active license and exchange it for an ID for free. This is less complicated if the license is active, so don't let it expire when you stop driving.
- The RMV can give road tests to anyone if it is requested by the driver or the drivers' doctor.
- You can report someone to the RMV, but you have to sign your name. The RMV will not take action on anonymous complaints
- Hospitals will do evaluations of older drivers. However, these results are not sent to the Registry.
- Police can pull a drivers' license on the spot if necessary – this is called "immediate threat" but it can be appealed.
- At age 75 the Registry of Motor Vehicles requires "in person" license renewals which are valid for 5 years. You must pass the eye test in order to get your renewal.

Massachusetts' Strategic Highway Safety Plan – Older drivers' emphasis group has been working on this topic for a few years now. The Older Driver Safety Summit planned for June 16 will generate recommendations on older driver policy. Register for the summit here:

<http://scholarworks.umb.edu/olderdriverssafetysummit/>

Giving up your license can be emotional! It's hard to imagine life without driving for those who have always driven. Here are some resources for those who are facing this decision, or who want to learn more about this topic:

- At The Crossroads Brochure- MIT's brochure for older drivers with dementia
- Travel training for those who want to reduce driving, senior persons with disabilities
- RTAs have travel training programs- how to read maps, pay fares, etc.
- Aging & Disability Research Consortia exist across the state and usually have resources to help people find alternative transportation as well as other resources
- For support finding transportation alternatives, look at www.mass.gov/hst